

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 21, 2003

The Honorable Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House
House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker of the House Hastert and House Minority Leader Pelosi:

As Members of Congress from Washington state, we implore you to bring to the floor and pass an Unemployment Insurance extension for American workers before Congress adjourns for the May recess. As you know, the country remains at a six-percent unemployment rate – a nine-year high. During these difficult economic times, Congress must extend Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) benefits for another 26 weeks in order to help America's hard-hit families.

Millions of Americans are depending on Congress to move forward with another extension before the end of May. The constituents we represent in Washington state have been some of the hardest hit by the fallout of September 11th, the downward trend in the aviation industry, and a lack of consumer confidence and demand. With an overall state unemployment rate of nearly seven-percent, Washington has one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation. Several Washington counties have double-digit unemployment rates, and new layoffs are announced daily.

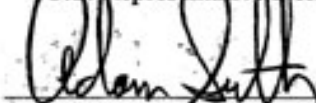
A 26-week extension of unemployment benefits is critically needed in order to help families all across the country and to aid in the nation's economic recovery. In Washington state alone, an estimated 51,200 workers have already exhausted regular state UI benefits, with an additional 20,400 who will exhaust TEUC benefits later this month. If Congress does not act, an additional 30,400 workers in Washington state will lose their benefits by the end of August.

American workers, their families, and the U.S. economy need your help. Congress must do its part to ensure these necessary benefits do not expire.

We respectfully request your assistance with securing and extending Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation by passing an extension before the May recess.

Sincerely,

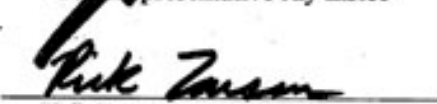

U.S. Representative Norm Dicks


U.S. Representative Adam Smith


U.S. Representative Brian Baird


U.S. Representative Jim McDermott


U.S. Representative Jay Inslee


U.S. Representative Rick Larsen